United Nations ECE/CES/2015/14/Add.8

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
4 May 2015

English only

Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of European Statisticians

Sixty-third plenary session
Geneva, 15-17 June 2015
Item 7 (a) of the provisional agenda
Reports on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians, its Bureau and Teams of Specialists

Implementation of the UNECE Statistical Programme 2014

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Report of the 2014 October meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians

Summary

The present report is submitted in compliance with the Rules Governing the Work of the Conference and its Bureau (ECE/CES/2007/8), adopted by the Conference of European Statisticians at its fifty-third plenary session. Referring to the Rules, the Bureau acts as a steering body of the Conference. The report includes decisions taken by the Bureau at its 21-22 October 2014 meeting on the work carried out under the auspices of the Conference.

GE.15-08852 (E)

Please recycle

I. Introduction

1. The meeting of the CES Bureau was held in Geneva on 21-22 October 2014. The following members of the Bureau attended: Mr. W. Smith (Chairman), Mr. K. Pesendorfer (Austria), Mr. T. Koskimäki (representing Ms. Marjo Bruun, Finland), Mr. A.M. Ortega (representing Mr. Eduardo Sojo Garza-Aldape, Mexico), Mr. B. Aydemir (Turkey), and Mr. G. Watson (representing Mr. John Pullinger, United Kingdom). The following permanent observers also attended: Mr. V. Sokolin (CIS-STAT), Ms. M. Kotzeva (representing Mr. W. Radermacher, Eurostat), Mr. L. M. Ducharme (IMF), Ms. M. Durand (OECD), and Ms. L. Bratanova (UNECE).

2. The following persons attended at the invitation of the Chair of the Bureau: Mr. C. Bach (Executive Secretary of UNECE) for agenda item 4; Mr. G-S. Ulrich and Mr. B. Rothen (Switzerland) for agenda item 9 (a), Ms. M. Wahlström (UNISDR) for agenda item 2 (b) and Mr. R. Crotti (World Economic Forum) for agenda item 10.

3. The following persons assisted the members of the Bureau: Mr. S. Dufour (Canada), Mr. A. Kosarev (CIS-STAT), Ms. S. Onur (Turkey) and Ms. C. Sa (Eurostat). Ms. T. Luige of UNECE served as Secretary of the meeting.

4. The following staff of the UNECE Statistical Division also attended: Mr. C. Boldsen, Mr. A. Vikat, Mr. M. Nagy, Mr. S. Vale, Ms. A. Peltola, Mr. P. Valente and Ms. V. Etropolska.

II. In-depth reviews of selected statistical areas

1. Demographic projections

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/2 by Canada and the United Kingdom, 2/Add.1 by UNECE, 2/Add.2 by Turkey

5. The Bureau conducted an in-depth review of population projections based on a paper by Canada and the United Kingdom and notes by UNECE and Turkey. The following issues were discussed:

(a) Various national and international institutions produce an increasing number of population projections. These often lead to different results depending on the methodology and assumptions used, especially concerning migration;

(b) Communication with policymakers, media and other users of population projections is very important. When releasing demographic projections, clear information should be included about the methodology, assumptions and scenarios, and how the results can be used;

(c) A collection of good practices on communicating population projections to users, including communicating uncertainty, would be useful, as there is limited material available in this area;

(d) It was proposed the Secretariat set up a database with metadata about national and international population projections. OECD is willing to share its information on population projections for this purpose;

(e) Eurostat confirmed its support to the regular joint Eurostat-UNECE expert meetings on demographic projections. The meetings provide a forum to discuss the related technical issues but also to connect producers and users of demographic projections.

Conclusions

6. The Bureau decided to set up a task force on population projections to carry out the following tasks: (i) Prepare a collection of good practices on communicating population projections to users; (ii) Provide guidance on the establishment of a UNECE database of metadata about national and international population projections. The following countries and organizations expressed interest in participating in the task force: Canada, Mexico, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom and Eurostat.

7. The Secretariat will draft the terms of reference for the task force to be discussed by the Bureau at its February 2015 meeting.

2. Measuring extreme events and disasters

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/3 by Mexico, 3/Add.1 by UNECE, 3/Add.2 by Turkey

8. The Bureau conducted an in-depth review of measuring extreme events and disasters based on a paper by Mexico, and notes by UNECE and Turkey. The following issues were discussed:

(a) NSOs possess data that can be used for disaster relief, preparedness and risk reduction. When extreme events and disasters occur, there is an urgent demand for real-time data on population, businesses and infrastructure in the concerned area. Historical data are needed for risk-management, early warning systems and assessing the impact of disasters;

(b) Clarification of the role of NSOs in providing information on disasters and extreme events is important. One example of the issues to be considered is how to deal with statistical confidentiality when detailed information is needed for disaster relief;

(c) Statistical information has to be combined with geographical information. Institutional cooperation between the NSOs and mapping agencies is needed for this purpose;

(d) There are strong similarities between the work on this topic and the work on climate change related statistics: first, it is important to define the role of official statistics in this area, then look at what official statistics can contribute, what users need, which statistics are readily available and which should be developed in future. It is crucial to establish collaboration with partner organizations involved in this area;

(e) One of the first tasks would be to agree on common classifications and definitions on disasters and extreme events for statistical purposes. The Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES) was mentioned as an important reference document, providing a typology of disasters;

(f) Several UN agencies are dealing with this topic and better coordination is needed;

(g) ESCAP has initiated a programme for the development of natural disaster statistics in Asia and the Pacific. A meeting of the expert group on this topic took place on 27-29 October 2014 in Sendai, Japan;

(h) The 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will be held on 14-18 March 2015 in Sendai, Japan. One of the sessions will be on data gaps. Participation of statisticians to help clarify concepts and terminology will be important.

Conclusions

9. The Secretariat, in consultation with Mexico, Eurostat, OECD and UNISDR, will develop terms of reference for a group to deal with statistics on extreme events and disasters, and explore countries' interest in participating in the work. The group should consider the role of official statistics in this area and develop a work plan.

10. UNISDR will make a recommendation to countries to involve NSOs in the national delegations who will participate in the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Japan in 2015.

III. CES Members' Guidebook

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/4 by Canada

11. The Bureau discussed a draft *CES Members' Guidebook*. The Guidebook provides information on CES and its Bureau: their role, history, working procedures, outputs and on the ways they support international statistical development in the UNECE region and beyond. The following issues were discussed:

(a) The Guidebook will be very useful for all CES and Bureau members;

(b) The Guidebook could explain more explicitly the relation of UNECE and CES to the broader UN system;

(c) The key achievements of CES over the last years could be highlighted even more in the Guidebook for the reader to better understand the overall value of CES.

Conclusions

12. The Bureau welcomed the *CES Members' Guidebook* and thanked Canada for the initiative to prepare it. The Bureau asked the Secretariat to finalise the Guidebook in light of the discussion at the Bureau meeting and make it available for all CES members and stakeholders.

IV. Meeting with the Executive Secretary of UNECE

13. The Bureau met with the UNECE Executive Secretary, Mr. Christian Bach. The Executive Secretary underlined that statistics is a priority working area of UNECE considering the increasing demands for timely and reliable information for monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He also referred to other important global conferences that increase the demand for statistics and statistical capacities: the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (Sendai, Japan, March 2015) and the United Nations Climate Change Conference (Paris, 2015).

14. Mr. Bach emphasised that CES has a crucial role in engaging its members in responding to these huge measurement challenges. In addition to monitoring the achievement of policy goals, statistics can be used for empowering people and mobilising action to achieving change. The Executive Secretary urged statisticians to challenge themselves to rethink how official statistics are produced. Particular attention should be paid to significantly improving the timeliness of data. Mr. Bach also underlined that CES can be at the forefront of exploring how to use new data sources, build partnerships in providing data for SDGs, and find new ways to promote the use of statistics.

V. Discussion on Data Revolution

15. The Bureau discussed the work of the Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development (IEAG), established by the United Nations Secretary-General on 29 August 2014. The Group will provide input to the Secretary-General's Synthesis Report on measures required to close the data gaps and strengthen national statistical capacities in view of the post-2015 development agenda. There are five statisticians in the Group which has 25 members.

16. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) CES has an active work agenda on issues related to data revolution and the use of new data sources for official statistics, including Big Data;

(b) NSOs should be at the core of monitoring SDGs, coordinating the work and ensuring quality control of data and metadata. It will be crucial to create mechanisms that support close collaboration among the SDG data producers, including those outside the statistical system;

(c) Providing data for SDGs will require a massive investment in statistical systems, even in developed countries. The existing statistical capacity will not allow to achieve the expected data quality and coverage for the 169 SDG targets and an even higher number of indicators. Qualitatively new solutions are needed. Data revolution can be a way forward, especially in developing countries;

(d) Statistical capacity building will have an important role. This is reflected in Goal 17 related to means of implementation;

(e) The statistical community has a long history of dealing with trade-off between timeliness, quality and cost. Official statisticians can use their core competencies in looking for ways to considerably improve timeliness while respecting the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics;

(f) National statistical offices could provide quality assessment of SDG data, including for data created outside official statistics. However, this would require additional resources;

(g) Full transparency and openness about methodology of data production should be required from all SDG data producers. Some private producers may be reluctant to provide information on the methods used. The question is how to ensure that private data producers comply with the quality requirements, including the principle of confidentiality and the right to privacy;

(h) There have been discussions about introducing an international Watchdog to monitor data quality;

(i) Public-private partnerships may allow statisticians new ways to provide society with high quality data. Examples of good practices and results achieved through public-private partnerships should be shared among statistical offices;

(j) Improved collaboration among international organizations is crucial for SDG monitoring. International organizations should bring statistical experts together to agree on practical ways forward in SDG monitoring and reporting. This can be done at a regional level and in collaboration with geospatial and research communities.

Conclusions

17. The Bureau will discuss the implications of the report on *Mobilising the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development* (www.undatarevolution.org) at its meeting in February 2015.

VI. UNECE Statistical Programme for 2015

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/5 by UNECE

18. The Bureau discussed the draft UNECE Statistical Programme for 2015 and the various Steering Groups and Task Forces that are related to the activities. The terms of reference of currently active Teams of Specialists are available at www.unece.org/stats/ToS.html.

19. The CIS-Stat emphasised the importance of coordinating the capacity building events in the CIS countries and asked the Bureau to discuss coordination of capacity building activities at a future meeting.

Conclusions

20. The Bureau approved the Statistical Programme for 2015 subject to the suggestions made in the discussion on individual items below.

1. Ageing-related statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/6 by the Task Force

21. The Bureau reviewed the progress report of the Task Force on Ageing-related Statistics and discussed further work. The following issues were discussed:

(a) Eurostat supports this work in view of the high policy importance of ageing in EU. Closer cooperation with Eurostat can reduce reporting burden on countries and ensure consistency of responses from EU-wide surveys;

(b) Achieving good quality of indicators is challenging. This issue should be considered in the upcoming meeting of the Task Force;

(c) While supporting the modern way of working via websites and teleconferences, face-to-face meetings remain important for the Task Force's success.

Conclusions

22. The Bureau supported the on-going work of the Task Force on Ageing-related Statistics.

2. Time-use surveys

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/7 by UNECE

23. The Bureau discussed follow-up work on time-use surveys after the endorsement of the *Guidelines for harmonizing time-use surveys* and reviewed the terms of reference for a Task Force on valuing unpaid household service work. The following issues were discussed:

(a) The Guidelines are valuable as time-use surveys are very important for analysing gender issues and are the only source for analysing some aspects of wellbeing

and unpaid work. There is a clear user demand for time-use data as well as a need for their harmonization;

(b) The Secretariat's collection of methodological material on time-use surveys was appreciated. OECD offered to share the information they have collected in the context of *ex-post* harmonization of time-use surveys;

(c) Partnerships with academic institutions may provide opportunities for experimenting with modern methods of data collection on time-use;

(d) The task force on valuing unpaid household services should identify the methodological and statistical challenges for NSOs in this area, and analyse the feasibility of available approaches;

(e) The task force should also consider in its work the recommendations of non-statistical bodies, such as those of the Committee on National Statistics of the United States National Academy of Sciences.

Conclusions

24. The Bureau approved the terms of reference of the Task Force on valuing unpaid household service work.

3. Political and other community activities

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/8 by UNECE

25. The Bureau discussed possible follow-up work on political and other community activities, after an in-depth review carried out in February 2013. As requested by the Bureau, the Secretariat conducted a consultation among countries and international organizations on the way forward. The consultation revealed that very few countries are ready to participate in work on this topic. The Bureau asserted that the topic is important but difficult to measure. OECD is considering examining this topic in the context of its *How's Life* initiative.

Conclusions

26. The Bureau decided to put this work on hold until a greater degree of interest is demonstrated by countries.

4. Social protection

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/9 by UNECE, OECD, World Bank and ILO

27. The Bureau discussed possible follow-up work on social protection based on a paper prepared by UNECE, OECD, World Bank and ILO. The paper presented the outcome of the recent meeting of the Social Protection Inter-agency Cooperation Board (SPIAC-B) who is working towards harmonization in this field. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) Social protection is covered in government finance statistics and in the *Classification of the Functions of Government* (COFOG), so some standards exist on government spending on social protection;

(b) Social Protection Statistics and Indicators Inter-Agency Working Group was formed in March 2013 in conjunction with SPIAC-B to address issues concerning standardization of definitions and classifications and harmonization of data collection.

Conclusions

28. The Bureau decided to invite a representative of the SPIAC-B to attend an upcoming Bureau meeting to present the work and planned activities of SPIAC-B concerning harmonization and international comparability of social protection statistics. The meeting would provide an opportunity to raise the issue of international comparison of social protection statistics with the SPIAC-B.

5. Entrepreneurship

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/10 by OECD, Eurostat and UNECE

29. The Bureau discussed possible follow-up work on entrepreneurship, after an in-depth review carried out in October 2013. The discussion was based on a paper by OECD, Eurostat and UNECE presenting the outcome of the recent meeting of the Eurostat/OECD Entrepreneurship Indicators Programme. The following issues were discussed:

(a) Improving timeliness of entrepreneurship statistics should be given high priority;

(b) Breakdowns of entrepreneurship indicators by age and size, and by ownership (domestic or foreign) are important but particularly difficult to achieve;

(c) The outcomes of the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) project to develop guidelines for measuring entrepreneurship from a gender perspective should be taken into account in any further work. The guidelines are expected to be finalized by 2016;

(d) Possible future work on entrepreneurship statistics should take into account the upcoming *Guidelines on Statistical Business Registers* to ensure consistency in the treatment of entrepreneurship indicators.

Conclusions

30. The Bureau endorsed the proposals for further work presented in document ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/10. The Bureau will discuss possible further work on entrepreneurship statistics in relation to business registers after finalisation of the *Guidelines on Statistical Business Registers* which will be presented to the CES plenary session for endorsement in June 2015.

6. Climate change-related statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/11 by UNECE

31. The Bureau discussed possible follow-up work on climate change-related statistics after the endorsement of the *CES Recommendations on climate change-related statistics*. The proposal by the Secretariat reflects the outcome of a wide consultation among CES member countries and organisations. The following issues were discussed:

(a) The Bureau expressed strong support for the proposed way forward in climate change-related statistics;

(b) The proposed Task Force on a set of key climate change related statistics should ensure that it does not duplicate the work to be carried out under the OECD Implementation Plan for the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) and the related core tables. Close cooperation of these two streams of work will be necessary;

(c) OECD confirmed their readiness to organize a seminar on SEEA implementation jointly with UNECE. The OECD Environment Policy Committee will also be willing to contribute to the organization of this seminar;

(d) Participation of NSOs that are responsible for greenhouse gas inventory compilation would be useful in the follow-up work (currently Turkey is the only such country interested in participating in the Task Force);

(e) Mexico and Eurostat are willing to participate in the Steering Group that will provide guidance to future work on climate change related statistics. Canada, Mexico, Turkey, OECD and UNSD are interested in participating in the Task Force.

Conclusions

32. The Bureau approved the terms of reference for a Steering Group on Climate Change-related Statistics and a Task Force on a Set of Key Climate Change-related Statistics. The Task Force should ensure coordination of work with the development of the related SEEA core tables.

7. Environmental indicators

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/12 by UNECE

33. The Bureau discussed the terms of reference of the Joint UNECE Intersectoral Task Force on Environmental Indicators. The following issues were raised:

(a) The Bureau welcomed the work of the Joint Task Force and noted its importance in providing support to national statistical offices in the area of environmental statistics;

(b) The Joint Task Force could promote the use of SDMX for more effective dissemination of environmental statistics.

Conclusions

34. The Bureau approved the terms of reference for the UNECE Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators. The terms of reference will also be presented for approval to the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (28-31 October 2014). The Bureau asked the Joint Task Force to report on its work plans and progress of work at regular intervals.

8. Leading, composite and sentiment indicators

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/13 by UNECE

35. The Bureau discussed possible follow-up work on leading, composite and sentiment indicators, after an in-depth review carried out in January 2014 and a discussion at the CES plenary session in April 2014. The proposal by the Secretariat reflects the outcome of these discussions and the electronic consultation among CES members. The following issues were raised:

(a) There is strong demand for leading, composite and sentiment indicators. NSOs can produce such indicators on impartial basis by using sound and transparent methodologies;

(b) It is essential to have a clear communication strategy for such indicators to avoid misinterpretation. Interpretation guidelines for users could be developed to complement the existing compilation guidelines for producers;

(c) Exchange of good practices would help countries which are producing such indicators, even though work in this area is not a priority for all statistical offices;

(d) Composite indicators require a good theoretical framework for deciding on weights and aspects to be measured. This calls for close collaboration with academia. A possible Task Force in this area should include economists and experts in social issues in addition to statisticians;

(e) Country rankings based on composite indicators create a lot of media attention while they are highly sensitive to changes in the compilation methodology;

(f) International guidance on compiling such indicators would help to ensure a harmonized methodology. In this context, the Bureau welcomes the upcoming UNSD handbooks on tendency surveys, composite indicators and rapid estimates;

(g) Further work in this area should be in line with the Eurostat User Guide to the Joint Harmonized EU Programme of Business and Consumer Surveys published in March 2014;

(h) A possible seminar organised on this topic should not overlap with the seminars organised by Eurostat, OECD or UNSD focusing on indicators in specific subject areas.

Conclusions

36. The Bureau asked the Secretariat to organise a seminar on leading, composite and sentiment indicators to discuss the way forward which should focus on (i) the role of national statistical offices; (ii) criteria for their involvement and (iii) the communication challenges related to these indicators.

9. Modernization of statistical production and services

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/14 by UNECE

37. The Bureau discussed the innovative working methods introduced in the activities overseen by the High-Level Group for the modernization of statistical production and services (HLG) and the extent to which these could be applied in other work areas of the CES. The following issues were raised:

(a) The new working methods have been very effective in the work under HLG and have resulted in good quality and timely outputs;

(b) Concentrating activities into a short period of time can be a strain on resources but may be more efficient than sporadic engagement in longer-term activities. However, organizations need to carefully consider when they can free resources for this work and there is a risk of over-engaging some experts;

(c) Aiming for outputs that are "good enough" rather than perfect was supported but it may sometimes be difficult to define what is "good enough". The acceptable level of quality may be different in different areas, and this should not be seen as an incentive to accept lower quality;

(d) The work of the HLG should be brought to the attention of the Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development;

(e) The wider applicability of new working methods will depend on the subject-matter area, for example the balance between quality and timeliness would be different for technical products and guidelines compared to legislative texts.

Conclusions

38. The Bureau showed high interest in the innovative working methods used in the activities of the HLG. These methods can be experimented in other areas of international collaboration work under CES. It would be useful to have practical guidance on how to apply the new working methods.

10. Other issues related to the Statistical Programme

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/26 by UNECE

39. The Bureau discussed future maintenance of the Database of International Statistical Activities (DISA) and the need for updating the Classification of International Statistical Activities. The following issues were discussed:

(a) The classification of statistical activities needs to be updated to include new, emerging areas of international statistical work, such as climate change related statistics, composite indicators, geo-spatial data, etc. The name of the classification should also be considered;

(b) The updating procedure of the database should be simplified, e.g. by providing a link to the statistical programmes of the international organizations on the web, or a list of statistical areas where the organizations are active.

Conclusions

40. The Bureau decided to launch the update of the Classification of International Statistical Activities and asked the Secretariat to prepare a proposal for the updating procedure for the next meeting of the Bureau.

41. The Bureau was in support of simplifying the process of DISA maintenance and asked for more information on the user demand before deciding whether there is a need for continuation of maintaining the database.

VII. Report on Gender Equality Indicators

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/15 by the Task Force

42. The Bureau considered the *Report on Indicators of Gender Equality* prepared by the Task Force on this topic. The updated version of the Report reflects the discussions at the CES 2014 plenary session and the suggestions made during the electronic consultation prior to the plenary session. The following issues were discussed:

(a) The Report will greatly improve monitoring of gender equality and capacity building in this area. The gender-centred (as opposed to women-centred) approach taken was particularly welcome, as was the section on children and adolescents;

(b) OECD provided detailed comments to the Secretariat for further updates of the indicators.

Conclusions

43. The Bureau endorsed the *Report on Indicators of Gender Equality* and thanked the Task Force for its work.

VIII. How to evaluate the impact of CES work

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/16 by UNECE

44. The Bureau was informed of the current procedures for evaluating the work carried out under CES. The Bureau considered how to evaluate the impact of CES activities in future. The following issues were discussed:

(a) Evaluations should focus on the outcome of the work, e.g. whether countries apply the CES recommendations and what is their value to countries;

(b) A thorough evaluation of the impact of CES work would be a heavy exercise. Furthermore, analyzing actual changes due to implementing the CES recommendations in countries would require time as the results cannot be seen immediately;

(c) The evaluation process should not distract resources from the subject-matter work;

(d) The Secretariat should look for new ways to promote awareness of CES and its products;

(e) Improving the evaluation of the impact of CES work can be done gradually. One step would be to ask Steering Groups to follow-up on the implementation of the CES recommendations in their area and report back to the Bureau;

(f) Criteria for success and failure of the activities should be included in the terms of reference of the Steering Groups and the Task Forces.

Conclusions

45. The Biennial Performance Reports will be discontinued as they became voluntary under the new UNECE Evaluation Policy.

46. The Bureau supported the theme "Impact of CES work on measuring sustainable development" for the next internal evaluation of the UNECE statistics subprogramme that will be carried out in 2016-17.

47. The Bureau agreed on a stepwise process to improving the evaluation of the impact of the outcomes of CES work. The terms of reference for future Steering Groups should include a task to follow up on countries' progress in implementing the CES recommendations. The secretariat will make a proposal for the success criteria for the work of Task Forces to the next CES Bureau meeting.

IX. Follow-up to the CES 2014 plenary session

1. Evaluation of the 62nd plenary session

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/17 by UNECE

48. The results of the evaluation questionnaires of the 2014 CES plenary session were presented for information.

Conclusions

49. Evaluation of the future CES plenary sessions will be conducted through electronic questionnaires.

2. Follow-up to the CES seminar "What is the value of official statistics and how do we communicate that value?"

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/18 by UNECE

50. The Bureau discussed the follow-up actions to the CES 2014 seminar on "What is the value of official statistics and how do we communicate that value?" The following issues were discussed:

(a) The objective of any work on communicating the value of official statistics should be clearly specified;

(b) The overall aim of this work would be to achieve a recognition of the value of official statistics by stakeholders, following the adoption of the Fundamental Principles by the UN General Assembly;

(c) The challenge of communicating the value of official statistics should be approached in a professional way. The value may be interpreted differently in different countries and by various audiences. The message and means of promoting the value should therefore be also different;

(d) A common strategy, tools and marketing techniques for communicating the value of official statistics would be useful. These can include indicators to measure the value of official statistics, and a collection of case studies of calculating its economic value. In addition to economic value, official statistics also have a social value.

(e) Using an external evaluation and engaging people outside official statistics to promote its value may increase the credibility of these measures;

(f) There is a lack of comparable information on the cost of producing official statistics that could be used in the discussions on value of official statistics. Some cost estimates are available on censuses and there have been attempts to measure the cost of producing national accounts by OECD. However, this work is challenging. Work on methods for calculating the cost of producing official statistics could be launched under the Conference;

(g) Opinions differed concerning the right forum to discuss the value of official statistics and its communication. Some participants found that this work falls outside HLG. Others considered the HLG Modernization Committee on Products and Sources to be well placed to address this issue. Some participants recommended that this topic also be discussed at future CES work sessions on statistical communication;

(h) United Kingdom is ready to take a lead in working on communicating the value of official statistics. Canada and Mexico expressed interest in participating in the work.

Conclusions

51. United Kingdom, in collaboration with Canada, Mexico and the Secretariat, will draft a road map exploring the key aspects to be covered in further work on communicating the value of official statistics. The proposal will be submitted to the Bureau for consideration at its next meeting.

3. Follow-up to the CES seminar on migration statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/19 by UNECE

52. The Bureau discussed follow-up actions to the CES 2014 seminar on migration statistics and reviewed the terms of reference for a Steering Group on migration statistics. The following issues were raised:

(a) The UNECE work session on migration statistics in the Republic of Moldova in September 2014 advocated for the use of "mirror statistics" to improve quality of migration data. A reference to "mirror statistics" should be added to the terms of reference of the Steering Group;

(b) Cooperation between countries on data exchange is a key challenge in improving migration statistics;

(c) Political support is needed for the use of "mirror statistics" and data exchange;

(d) Measurement of irregular migration, refugees and displaced persons is an important issue to be considered for further work;

(e) The need for documenting success stories and pilot projects in this area was highlighted;

(f) The terms of reference of the Steering Group should be more specific.

Conclusions

53. The Bureau approved the terms of reference for the Steering Group on migration statistics, subject to including the following points: (i) promotion of collaboration between government agencies, (ii) promotion of the use of "mirror statistics", (iii) importance of the measurement of refugees and displaced persons, and (iv) regular reporting by the Steering Group to the Bureau on emerging issues and possible ways of addressing them.

X. Preparation for the CES 2015 plenary session

1. Organization of the CES 2015 seminar on the response of official statistics to Sustainable Development Goals

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/20 by Switzerland

54. The Bureau discussed the organization of the CES 2015 seminar on the response of official statistics to Sustainable Development Goals based on an outline prepared by the seminar organizer. The following issues were raised:

(a) It is important to identify the expected outcome of the seminar;

(b) It is desirable to have a keynote speaker from policy level, preferably a person involved in the SDG process (e.g. Amina Mohammed);

(c) The seminar should discuss coordination of monitoring SDGs at regional level, building on the outcome of the UNECE session which will take place in April 2015. There have been proposals to select a sub-set of about 100 indicators relevant for the region. A possible mechanism of peer reviews is being considered;

(d) The role of statistical offices in measuring achievement of SDGs will be crucial. The seminar should be an opportunity to clarify the expectations to statistical systems with regard to SDGs, and stress the leading role of NSOs in data collection, accreditation and methodology. The discussion should also deal with disseminating the data on SDGs, including those produced outside the statistical system;

(e) The indicators for the post-2015 development agenda will present a huge challenge to NSOs. All these indicators cannot be produced with the traditional statistical processes, therefore alternative methods are needed. If NSOs cannot respond to the challenge, this may put the future of the statistical community at risk;

(f) The seminar should discuss how to implement the recommendations of the Independent Advisory Expert Group (IEAG) on data revolution. It will be important to have the statisticians who were members of IEAG participating in the CES seminar;

(g) Countries at different levels of statistical development should participate in the seminar to present their views;

(h) Capacity building is essential as there are capacity gaps in even the most advanced countries. The question is how to finance this work;

(i) Cooperation among IOs is an important issue to be discussed;

(j) The work of the Friends of the Chair Group on broader measures of progress should be taken into account. The Group has made an analysis of data availability for the proposed targets and indicators;

(k) Representatives of different stakeholders should be invited to the seminar: policy people, non-official data producers, etc.

Conclusions

55. The seminar will take place on Monday, 15 June 2015. The seminar organisers will proceed with the preparations, taking into account the recommendations by the Bureau.

2. Organisation of the CES 2015 seminar on modernization of statistical production and services and managing for efficiency

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/21 by Ireland and Italy

56. The Bureau discussed the organization of the CES 2015 seminar on modernization of statistical production and services and managing for efficiency based on an outline prepared by the seminar organizers. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) Summaries of contributions should be subject-driven, rather than a series of descriptions of country experiences;

(b) The use of interactive tools was supported, but there was concern that inviting comments and questions from remote participants could take up too much time;

(c) It could be useful to have input from private sector data producers in the second session.

Conclusions

57. The seminar will take place on Tuesday, 16 June 2015. The seminar organisers will proceed with the preparations, taking into account the recommendations by the Bureau.

3. Report on measuring quality of employment to be submitted to CES in 2015

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/22 by the Expert Group

58. The Bureau considered the draft *Statistical Framework for Measuring Quality of Employment* prepared by an Expert Group chaired by Germany. The following issues were discussed:

(a) The Bureau supported the work of the Expert Group. The Framework is very useful as there is high policy interest in this area;

(b) The Framework should be considered a statistical toolbox that can be used by countries in compiling quality of employment indicators. The Framework is flexible allowing indicators to be compiled according to data availability and national needs and conditions. All countries are not requested to compile all indicators.

Conclusions

59. The Secretariat will circulate the *Statistical Framework for Measuring Quality of Employment* to all CES members for electronic consultation in view of presenting it to the CES 2015 plenary session for endorsement.

4. Report on business registers to be submitted to CES in 2015

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/23 by the Task Force;
ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/25 by UNECE in consultation with Austria, OECD, Eurostat and UNECE

60. The Bureau considered the progress of work in finalising the *International Guidelines on Statistical Business Registers*. The Bureau also discussed the mandate and role of the Wiesbaden Group in relation to other groups working on business registers. The following issues were discussed:

(a) The Bureau supported the work of the Task Force. The Bureau recommended to include in the Guidelines some text on how new data sources, including Big Data, can help in maintaining statistical business registers in future;

(b) The Task Force has consulted the use of statistical units in national accounts with the Advisory Expert Group (AEG) on National Accounts to ensure consistency of concepts. The issues related to statistical units in statistical business registers should be considered also by the AEG on Classifications;

(c) The Bureau welcomed the note on the Wiesbaden Group and its relation to the work of the joint UNECE/Eurostat/OECD expert group on business registers and the Task Force on guidelines for statistical business registers. The Bureau noted that the Wiesbaden Group has its mandate from the UN Statistical Commission and any further issues concerning the Group should be addressed to UNSC.

Conclusions

61. The Secretariat will submit the draft *International Guidelines on Statistical Business Registers* to the February 2015 Bureau meeting for review prior to the electronic consultation with the CES members.

62. The Bureau welcomed the proposal by UNSD to have a global consultation of the *International Guidelines on Statistical Business Registers* and to submit them to the UN Statistical Commission, after consideration by the CES.

5. Preparation of the formal session, draft agenda and timetable

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/24 by UNECE

Conclusions

63. The 63rd CES plenary session will take place on 15-17 (a.m.) June 2015 in Geneva. The Bureau approved the draft timetable subject to possibly shortening the timeframe of the CES seminars to ensure enough time for the discussion of the substantive outcomes of work, such as CES recommendations and outcomes of in-depth reviews.

64. The Secretariat will prepare an updated timetable of the CES 2015 plenary session for the February 2015 meeting of the Bureau.

XI. Presentation of the World Economic Forum's activities related to statistics

65. The World Economic Forum (WEF) presented its work on composite indicators and their underlying methodologies. The WEF flagship product is the Global Competitiveness Report that includes a Global Competitiveness Index. The index was launched in 1979 and its coverage has been gradually extended reaching now 144 countries. The Index is based on quantitative data from international organizations and qualitative data from an annual Executive Opinion Survey on the perceptions of 15,000 business leaders worldwide.

66. WEF releases also other composite indices, such as a Network Readiness Index, Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index, Enabling Trade Index, Europe 2020 Composite Index, Gender Gap Index and Energy Architecture Performance Index. WEF is currently developing a sustainability-adjusted Global Competitiveness Index to take into account social and environmental issues, such as inequality, youth unemployment, vulnerable employment, environmental regulation and degradation, forest loss, water use, etc.

67. The following issues were discussed:

(a) WEF indices are widely used and very important for policy makers. WEF has a well-designed website and uses innovative ways of presenting data that could serve as a good example to statistical offices;

(b) The Bureau underlined the need to be fully transparent about the underlying methods and assumptions and have a solid conceptual foundation for the composite indexes. Furthermore, official statistics should be preferred as a data source;

(c) The weights assigned to the different components of indicators significantly influence the results. Information on the exact weights used, including for the business survey part should be publicly available. The Executive Opinion Survey reflects perceptions of business leaders. These can change even when the objective conditions do not change, for example due to increased attention to related issues in public discussions and media;

(d) To ensure impartiality, WEF indices are not financed by businesses or governments, the source data are extracted from established international organizations, and the results are not sent to countries for correction before publication. WEF uses data from international organizations instead of country sources because the data are considered more comparable and presented in a standardized format.

(e) Countries sometimes challenge the results of WEF Reports, for example due to outdated data used for calculating the indices. Therefore, countries should ensure that they submit correct and up-to-date information to international organizations. It would be good to create a systematic feedback from WEF providing signals on poor data quality to its data providers.

(f) The seminar on leading, composite and sentiment indicators to be organized under CES should involve WEF and other private institutes such as the Mexican Institute for Competitiveness (IMCO) in addition to national statistical offices.

(g) The discussion prompted a question whether an index describing the quality of national official statistics in countries could be developed.

Conclusions

68. The Bureau thanked the WEF representative for the informative presentation that provoked an interesting discussion. It would be useful to discuss synergies among official statisticians, WEF and other private agencies that compile indices at the seminar on leading, composite and sentiment indicators that UNECE will organise following the Bureau decision under agenda item 5(h).

XII. Discontinuation of the FAO-CES study on food and agricultural statistics

69. The Study Group on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Europe was established in 1959 by the Conference of European Statisticians and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The last meeting of the Study Group was held in 2005 and the Group has not been active since then.

Conclusions

70. The CES Bureau decided to discontinue the FAO-CES Study Group on Food and Agricultural Statistics.

XIII. Dates and venue of the next meetings

71. The Bureau confirmed the dates for its next meetings as follows:

(a) The next Bureau meetings will take place on 17-18 February 2015 in Geneva and on 20-21 October 2015, venue to be decided;

(b) The Bureau meetings in 2016 are tentatively scheduled for the week of 8 February in Luxemburg and 18-19 October, venue to be decided.

72. The 63rd CES plenary session will take place 15-17 June 2015 in Geneva, starting at 9:30 on 15 June and finishing by 12:30 on 17 June 2015. The meeting of the OECD Statistics Committee will take place back-to-back with the CES plenary session.

73. The 64th CES plenary session is tentatively scheduled to be held on 27-29 April 2016 in Paris.

XIV. Other business

74. The Bureau decided which papers of the CES Bureau meeting will be made available on the web (http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=33225).

75. Mr. John Pullinger of the United Kingdom was co-opted as a Bureau member until the next elections of the CES Bureau in June 2015, to replace Ms. Jil Matheson, the former Chief Statistician of the United Kingdom.

United Nations ECE/CES/2015/14/Add.9

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
29 April 2015

English only

Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of European Statisticians

Sixty-third plenary session
Geneva, 15-17 June 2015
Item 7 (a) of the provisional agenda
Reports on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians, its Bureau and Teams of Specialists

Implementation of the UNECE Statistical Programme 2014

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Report of the 2015 February meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians

Summary

The present report is submitted in compliance with the Rules Governing the Work of the Conference and its Bureau (ECE/CES/2007/8), adopted by the Conference of European Statisticians at its fifty-third plenary session. Referring to the Rules, the Bureau acts as a steering body of the Conference. The report includes decisions taken by the Bureau at its 17-18 February 2015 meeting on the work carried out under the auspices of the Conference.

GE.15-08581 (E)

1508581

Please recycle

I. Introduction

1. The 2015 spring meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) was held in Geneva on 17-18 February 2015. The following members of the Bureau attended: Mr. W. Smith (Chairman, Canada), Mr. K. Pesendorfer (Austria), Ms. M. Bruun (Finland), Mr. A.M. Ortega (representing Mr. Eduardo Sojo Garza-Aldape, Mexico), Mr. B. Aydemir (Turkey) and Mr. J. Pullinger (the United Kingdom). The following permanent observers also attended: Mr. V. Sokolin, (CIS-STAT), Ms. M. Kotzeva, (representing Mr. W. Radermacher, Eurostat), Mr. L. M. Ducharme (IMF), Ms. M. Durand, (OECD) and Ms. L. Bratanova (UNECE).

2. The following persons attended at the invitation of the Chair of the Bureau: Mr. Ozel (ILO), Mr. J. Magdeleine (WTO) and Mr. A. Maurer (WTO) for agenda item 2(b); Mr. G.S. Ulrich (Switzerland) and Mr. B. Rothen (Switzerland) for agenda item 2(c); and Mr. J. Capaldo (ILO) for agenda item 2(e).

3. The following persons assisted the members of the Bureau: Ms. Onur (Turkey), Ms. M.J. Santos (Eurostat), and Mr. A. Kosarev (CIS-STAT). Ms. T. Luige of UNECE served as Secretary of the meeting.

4. The following staff of the UNECE Statistical Division also attended: Mr. C. Boldsen, Mr. A. Vikat, Mr. S. Vale, Ms. T. Dimova, Mr. P. Valente, Ms. A. Peltola, Mr. J. Schachter, and Mr. E. Brand.

II. In-depth reviews of selected statistical areas

1. Process-oriented approach to statistical production

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/2 by Turkey, Add.1 by UNECE

5. The CES Bureau conducted an in-depth review of process-oriented approach to statistical production based on a paper by Turkey and a note by UNECE. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The paper by Turkey summarizes well the various practices regarding the organization of statistical production.

(b) Moving to a process-based structure in a statistical office can generate efficiency savings and ensure greater coherence between outputs, as well as a more sustainable approach to information technology management.

(c) The Generic Statistical Business Process Model provides a good framework for a process-based organizational structure.

(d) Bureau members brought examples of efficiency gains with improved organizational structures within their offices, such as setting up a department of project management that provides common tools for development work, and closer coordination of data collection to ensure the use of standard software and methodologies.

(e) The idea of a high-level seminar to share experiences on this topic was supported. The High-Level Group for the Modernization of Statistical Production and Services (HLG) would provide an appropriate framework for organizing such an event, though some Bureau members cautioned against over-loading the HLG with too many activities.

Conclusions

6. HLG will organise a high-level seminar on the process-oriented approach to statistical production, in collaboration with Turkey. The Bureau will assess the need for further work in this area after the seminar.

2. Labour mobility and globalisation

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/3 by Austria, Add.1 by UNECE

7. The CES Bureau conducted an in-depth review of labour mobility and globalisation based on a paper by Austria and a note by UNECE. ILO and WTO contributed to the discussion and made presentations on the topic. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The paper provides an excellent review of relevant issues giving a good basis for future work. It was suggested that UNECE should establish a Working Paper series to disseminate to a wider audience selected papers prepared under CES and its Bureau that can have an impact on international statistical work.

(b) Labour mobility is a complex and challenging topic cutting across a number of statistical domains. The increasing labour mobility has an impact on productivity measurement and national accounts, as the concepts of national borders and residence have become less relevant due to globalization. The topic is highly policy relevant to inform the discussion on labour supply and labour market policies.

(c) There is a clear need for a comprehensive framework and harmonization of terms and concepts in this area, starting with terms such as 'labour mobility', 'migration' and 'Mode 4' in WTO terminology (cross border movement of workers to provide services).

(d) Measurement of labour mobility requires integration of different data sources. Producing mirror statistics and promoting data exchange would be helpful in assessing the current data gaps, quality problems and development needs. Use of alternative sources, such as mobile phone records may need to be explored to fill data gaps.

(e) Improving statistics on labour mobility requires both national and international coordination. CES can contribute by bringing together the different work strands and improving coordination of work in this cross-cutting area.

(f) Any work to be carried out under CES on this topic should complement the work conducted by organizations such as ILO, WTO and OECD. ILO suggested that some of the members of a possible CES Task Force on labour mobility would participate in the ILO Working Group on Labour Migration Statistics to ensure good coordination.

(g) The composition of any future task force should include statisticians from different disciplines, both social and economic areas. The work should not be too broad and should focus on achieving practical results. A collection of case studies that illustrate good practices in countries would be useful.

Conclusions

8. The Bureau decided to create a Task Force on Labour Mobility and Globalisation with three main objectives:

- Preparing a collection of good practices;
- Establishing a framework with common definitions; and

- Improving data exchange.

9. The Bureau asked Austria, together with the UNECE Secretariat, to draft the terms of reference for the group for the next Bureau meeting. Turkey, Eurostat, OECD and WTO expressed their interest to participate in the Task Force.

10. The topic of labour mobility and globalisation was selected for discussion at the CES plenary session in June 2015 in Geneva. Austria will update the paper based on the Bureau discussion and comments received.

11. The Secretariat will launch a Working Paper series to disseminate to a wider audience selected papers prepared under CES and its Bureau that can have an impact on international statistical work.

3. Follow-up to the in-depth review on population projections

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/4 by UNECE

Conclusions

12. The Bureau approved the Terms of Reference for the Task Force on Population Projections.

4. Follow-up to the in-depth review on measuring extreme events and disasters

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/5 by UNECE in consultation with Mexico, Eurostat, OECD and UNISDR

13. The Bureau discussed the draft Terms of Reference for a Task Force on Measuring Extreme Events and Disasters prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with Mexico, Eurostat, OECD and UNISDR. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) Measuring extreme events and disasters is closely linked with geospatial data. The work should be coordinated with the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM) and related initiatives.

(b) The Task Force needs to coordinate its work closely with the work of UNESCAP in this area, and with the CES Steering Group on Climate Change-Related Statistics. A special session on measuring extreme events and disasters is planned to be held during the expert meeting on climate change related statistics on 2-3 September 2015 in Geneva.

(c) The UN Committee on Environmental-economic Accounting (UNCEEA) should be kept informed about the work due to the close relation between SEEA and measuring extreme events and disasters.

(d) Mexico, Turkey, OECD and Eurostat expressed their interest to participate in the Task Force.

Conclusions

14. The Bureau approved the terms of reference for the Task Force on Measuring Extreme Events and Disasters subject to comments made in the discussion. The Secretariat will contact the CES members to explore their interest to participate in the Task Force.

5. Follow-up to the in-depth review on social protection statistics

15. The Bureau discussed possible follow-up to the in-depth review on social protection statistics based on information from ILO, the co-chair of the Social Protection Interagency Cooperation Board (SPIAC-B). The following issues were discussed:

(a) The work of SPIAC-B addresses the harmonization and international comparability issues which the CES Bureau raised during the in-depth review in January 2014. SPIAC-B has also proposed a series of indicators on social protection relating to the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

(b) The latest SPIAC-B meeting on 3 February 2015 in New York discussed how to go forward with social protection indicators and data. The main outcome was an initiative to establish a world social protection database that would help to harmonize social protection statistics. The database attempts to address issues such as different definitions and legal provisions, and incoherence between the data sources. The database will provide a system of structured indicators integrating data from social security systems and social assistance.

(c) SPIAC-B uses Eurostat methodologies and definitions and coordinates closely with Eurostat. It is important to follow common classifications for comparability between countries and across different domains of statistics.

(d) OECD maintains a Social Expenditure database covering all OECD countries.

(e) The need for better harmonization of social protection statistics is especially relevant for developing countries. However, it will not be possible to fully harmonize these statistics due to the different institutional settings. Therefore, different indicators may be needed to monitor SDG targets related to social protection at global, regional and national levels.

Conclusions

16. No further activities on social protection will be undertaken under CES for the time being. The topic may be revisited in future, in particular in connection with the SDGs and targets related to social protection.

6. Selection of topics for in-depth reviews in 2015-2016

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/6 by UNECE

Conclusions

17. The following topics were selected for the in-depth reviews to be carried out in October 2015 and February 2016, including countries responsible for preparing the papers to provide basis for discussion:

(a) Strategic partnerships with stakeholders in the information industry (Canada);

(b) Diversification of population census methodology and sources (Finland and Turkey);

(c) Developing geospatial information services based on official statistics (author to be confirmed).

18. The fourth topic to be reviewed will be decided upon later, taking into account the developments with the SDGs, targets and indicators.

III. UNECE Statistical work and CES Teams of specialists

1. National accounts

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/7 by the Steering Group

19. The Bureau reviewed the updated Terms of Reference for the UNECE Steering Group on National Accounts. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Steering Group has been very useful to coordinate the work on globalization and national accounts, focusing in particular on the region of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

(b) The Steering Group should facilitate coordination of technical assistance activities on implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts (SNA) in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

(c) The Steering Group could also contribute to the work on the 2008 SNA research agenda towards the next revision of SNA.

(d) Compared to task forces, the coordination role of steering groups requires a longer-term mandate. Regular reporting to the Bureau provides a possibility of evaluating their work during the mandated period.

Conclusions

20. The Bureau approved the updated terms of reference of the Steering Group on National Accounts subject to comments made in the discussion, and extended the mandate of the Group until 2018.

2. Gender statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/8 by the Steering Group

21. The Bureau reviewed the updated terms of reference for the Steering Group on Gender Statistics. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Bureau supported the work of the Steering Group. The Steering Group has an important role in improving the collaboration of international organizations, users and producers of gender statistics, and the quality of gender statistics in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

(b) The Steering Group should aim at bringing together the best expertise in gender statistics. The European Institute for Gender Equality should be invited to join the Steering Group.

(c) The work should be coordinated with the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS) and should take into account the gender related targets and indicators in the Sustainable Development Goals.

Conclusions

22. The Bureau approved the updated terms of reference of the Steering Group on Gender Statistics subject to comments made in the discussion, and extended the mandate of the Group until 2018.

3. Human resources management and training

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/9 by the Steering Group

Conclusions

23. The Bureau reviewed the final report of the Steering Group on Human Resources Management and Training. The Bureau thanked the Steering Group for their successful work, and closed the Group.

24. The work will be continued under the HLG Modernization Committee on Organisational Framework and Evaluation. The Modernization Committee will organise a workshop on human resources management and training in 2016 in Poland.

4. Classification of International Statistical Activities

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/10 by UNECE

Conclusions

25. The Bureau agreed with the proposed procedure for updating the classification underlying the Database of International Statistical Activities (DISA). The Secretariat will set up a small group to carry out the revision, consisting of representatives of the Secretariat and the main users of the classification: SDMX, Paris21 and a country (Canada).

5. Modernization of statistical production and services

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/11 by HLG

26. The Bureau reviewed the outcomes of the international collaboration projects overseen by the High-Level Group for the Modernization of Statistical Production and Services (HLG) in 2014, and planned activities in 2015. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Bureau congratulated the HLG on the successful outcomes of the 2014 projects on the use of Big Data for official statistics and the implementation of the Common Statistical Production Architecture (CSPA).

(b) A key issue for the future will be to ensure that the outcomes of these projects are widely used in practice.

(c) Ensuring that the CSPA activities are sustainable in the longer term is a priority.

(d) Future Big Data activities should focus on the "sandbox" approach.

(e) There has been very good cooperation between the international organisations on these projects for the benefit of all stakeholders, including national statistical offices.

Conclusions

27. The Bureau commended the HLG on the outcomes achieved in 2014.

6. Success criteria for evaluating the work of the CES task forces and steering groups

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/12 by UNECE

28. The Bureau reviewed the proposal for success criteria to be applied to CES teams of specialists. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) In evaluating the work of the CES task forces and steering groups, the bureaucratic burden on the groups should be kept to the minimum. The groups should focus on substantive work. Any evaluation tasks should be integrated into existing work processes.

(b) When launching new teams of specialists, the Bureau should carefully consider the expected impact of their work. An important criterion is country engagement.

(c) It is important to inform about and promote the products after they have been finalized. Having an impact on global processes and being used as a basis for developing global recommendations is one of the indicators of success.

(d) The Bureau highlighted as a good practice that expert meetings follow up on the implementation of the various CES guidelines developed in recent years. This has proven effective in areas such as population censuses, migration, climate change, globalization, business registers, etc. The expert meetings should focus on sharing experience and identifying difficulties in implementing the CES guidelines to provide feedback for improving the guidelines.

Conclusions

29. The Steering Groups will report to the Bureau on the implementation of CES recommendations and guidelines in their respective areas. The Bureau welcomed the proposal for voluntary self-evaluation of the CES task forces and steering groups.

IV. Transformative agenda for official statistics: data revolution

30. The Bureau discussed the implications of the report A World That Counts: Mobilising a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development for the work of CES. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Bureau expressed concern about the high number of indicators planned for the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals, and emphasized the importance of active involvement of official statisticians in the consultation. NSOs should actively contribute to the discussion as country views are considered a priority.

(b) The Post-2015 Development Agenda provides a good opportunity to mobilise greater support and possibly resources for official statistics. At the same time, policy makers may look for alternative sources to fill data gaps and obtain more timely data. NSOs should be proactive in promoting their central role and professional competence in ensuring data quality.

(c) Modernization of statistical offices is needed to improve the efficiency of statistical production in general, not only in the context of SDGs.

(d) When there are data gaps for indicators to measure SDGs, international organizations should only publish data from non-official sources after consultation with the relevant national statistical organizations.

(e) The OECD mapping of existing indicators to potential goals and targets shows that there are data gaps also for OECD countries.

(f) The growing movement towards "open data" is an important part of the data revolution.

(g) Setting up any new groups for SDG monitoring should be carefully considered not to create extra layers of international bureaucracy. Existing groups and mechanisms should be used wherever possible.

(h) The Bureau supported the idea that CES should be seen as a "centre of excellence" on statistical modernization. As an example, Mexico will circulate a paper on their experience of establishing a centre of excellence with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. A regular annual reporting on HLG activities to the UN Statistical Commission would be desirable to inform a wider audience about the work.

Conclusions

31. Official statisticians, especially in countries need to be proactive in discussions to determine the indicators to monitor the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The Bureau supported the regular reporting of HLG activities to the UN Statistical Commission.

V. Preparation for the CES 2015 plenary session

1. Organisation of the CES 2015 seminar on the response of official statistics to Sustainable Development Goals

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/13 by Switzerland, France, Sweden and UNECE

32. The Bureau discussed the organisation of the CES 2015 seminar on the response of official statistics to Sustainable Development Goals based on an outline prepared by the seminar and session organisers. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) Official statisticians need to take the leadership role in monitoring the SDGs, this will be especially challenging in areas that are traditionally outside official statistics (e.g. peace and security).

(b) NSOs should use the SDGs as an opportunity to promote their coordination role in bringing national agencies together to provide data, including from outside the statistical system. Sharing NSO experience in cooperating with other institutions would be of interest at the seminar.

(c) It was proposed to prepare, as an outcome of the seminar, a CES declaration on the central role of national statistical offices in monitoring SDGs and their professional responsibility for promoting data quality. The message would be stronger if it could be coordinated with similar declarations in other regions.

(d) The focus of discussion at the seminar will be adjusted to take into account the latest developments with the SDG process that will take place before the seminar.

Conclusions

33. The Secretariat in cooperation with the seminar and session organisers will explore the possibility of preparing a CES declaration on the response of official statisticians to SDGs as an outcome of the seminar, and possibly coordinate this with other regions. Such a

declaration should be prepared well in advance of the meeting and consulted with the CES members.

34. The seminar organisers will proceed with the preparations, taking into account the recommendations by the Bureau. The seminar will take place on Monday, 15 June 2015, from 9:50 to 17:00.

2. Organisation of the CES 2015 seminar on modernization of statistical production and services and managing for efficiency

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/14 by Ireland and Italy

35. The Bureau supported the outline of the seminar prepared by Ireland and Italy.

Conclusions

36. The seminar organizers will proceed with the preparations as planned. The seminar will take place on Tuesday, 16 June 2015, from 9:30 to 17:00.

3. Draft agenda and timetable for the 2015 plenary session

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/15 by UNECE

Conclusions

37. The Bureau approved the provisional agenda and tentative timetable for the CES 2015 plenary session. Labour mobility and globalisation was selected as an in-depth review topic to be discussed at the plenary session.

4. Measuring Global Production

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/16 and Add1. by the Task Force

38. The Bureau supported the draft Guide to Measuring Global Production prepared by a dedicated Task Force chaired by Ireland. The Bureau noted that the industrial classification of factoryless goods producers and the recording of their transactions in national and international accounts is a priority area for further work after the finalization of the Guide.

Conclusions

39. An example on factoryless goods production by Canada and information on the work of the OECD Expert Group on Extended Supply-Use Tables will be added to the Guide.

40. The Secretariat will circulate the draft Guide to Measuring Global Production for electronic consultation to all CES members. Subject to the positive outcome of the consultation, the Guide will be submitted to the CES 2015 plenary session for endorsement. UNSD will extend the electronic consultation to all countries that are not CES members.

41. The Secretariat will organise the translation of the Guide into Russian using extra-budgetary resources.

5. International Guidelines on Statistical Business Registers

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/17 and Add.1 by the Task Force

42. The Bureau supported the draft International Guidelines on Statistical Business Registers prepared by a dedicated Task Force chaired by Austria.

Conclusions

43. The Secretariat will circulate the draft Guidelines on Statistical Business Registers for electronic consultation among all CES members. Subject to the positive outcome of the consultation, the Guidelines will be submitted to the CES 2015 plenary session for endorsement.

44. UNSD will circulate the Guidelines for global consultation and submit them to the next Statistical Commission session after endorsement by CES.

45. The Secretariat will organise the translation of the Guidelines into Russian using extra-budgetary resources.

46. The UNECE/Eurostat/OECD expert meetings on business registers will be used as a forum to follow-up on the implementation of the Guidelines.

5. Recommendations for 2020 Round of Population and Housing Censuses

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/18 and Add1. by the Steering Group and Task Forces

47. The Bureau supported the draft Recommendations for 2020 Round of Population and Housing Censuses prepared by a Steering Group chaired by Canada and nine Task Forces on censuses.

Conclusions

48. The Secretariat will circulate the draft CES Recommendations for 2020 Round of Population and Housing Censuses for electronic consultation among all CES members. Subject to the positive outcome of the consultation, the Recommendations will be submitted to the CES 2015 plenary session for endorsement.

49. CIS-Stat offered support in translating the Recommendations into Russian.

50. The forthcoming in-depth review on the diversification of population census methodology and sources (agenda item 2f) will build on the work carried out in drafting the CES Recommendations.

6. Socio-economic conditions of migrants

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/19 and 23 by the Task Force

51. The Bureau reviewed the Report on Socio-Economic Conditions of Migrants prepared by the Task Force chaired by Canada, and considered the terms of reference for a new Task Force on integration of multiple data sources to improve the measurement of migration. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The report's focus on a longitudinal approach for analysis and use of case-studies from several countries was appreciated. In future work on this topic, more attention

could be paid to identifying data gaps and recommendations how to overcome data limitations for longitudinal analysis.

(b) The report presents the outcome of analytical work and a collection of good practices from countries with numerical examples. Therefore, there is no need for a wide consultation with all CES members and the report can be endorsed by the Bureau.

(c) The proposed Task Force on integration of multiple data sources on migration should lead to a practical outcome that would help countries in producing better migration estimates.

Conclusions

52. The Bureau endorsed the report on Socio-Economic Conditions of Migrants prepared by the Task Force. The Secretariat will finalise the report for electronic publication and inform the CES members.

53. The terms of reference for the Task Force on Integration of Multiple Data Sources on Migration will be revised to emphasize the practical improvements that this work can bring to the quality of migration statistics, and resubmitted to the next Bureau meeting.

VI. Follow-up to the CES 2014 plenary session

1. Follow-up to the CES seminar on "What is the value of official statistics and how do we communicate that value?"

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/20 by the United Kingdom, Austria, Canada, Mexico, OECD and UNECE

54. The Bureau reviewed the proposal for a way forward on estimating and communicating the value of official statistics. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The value of official statistics is closely linked to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. A strong claim on the value of official statistics would be based on these Principles which emphasize the key role of official statistics in democratic societies.

(b) It would be useful to collect examples of how official statistics are used in decision making. Users may be accustomed to having high quality statistics at hand and cannot imagine the situation when data on employment, GDP, poverty, etc. would not be available.

(c) The communication of the value of official statistics should be done from the viewpoint of data users. Furthermore, "good quality" should be better explained to users as they may not understand well what it entails.

(c) The value of statistics may be perceived differently in different countries. Understanding the cultural context may help to better communicate the trade-off between quality and timeliness, for example in case of data revisions.

(e) Official statisticians could create value jointly with the private sector, such as by providing new information services. Official statisticians may also support private data producers to improve their methods and data quality, for example in the context of measuring SDGs.

(f) The proposed work strand 3 which focuses on the impact of official statistics, defining the value of official statistics and how to measure and demonstrate that value is the priority. This work strand will feed into the work on communication and marketing.

(g) Work strand 1 on marketing should focus on the exchange of experience through real-life cases, both successes and failures. In addition to discussing these issues among experts, it will be important to make the top management of NSOs aware of the lessons learned.

(h) Work strand 2 on cost estimates for statistical processes should not be too ambitious. These estimates are helpful in discussions with the government and policy makers. Possibility to roughly compare how much a certain statistical programme costs in different countries would be useful.

Conclusions

55. The Bureau strongly supported the proposal for further work, including the following work strands:

(a) Value and impact of official statistics (work strand 3), to be led by a new Task Force. This area requires intensive effort to establish a framework and indicators for measuring the value and impact of official statistics. The Task Force should also coordinate all CES activities related to the value of official statistics.

(b) Improving the marketing of the value of official statistics (work strand 1) to be led by the HLG Modernization Committee on Products and Sources in line with their current work plans. The Work Sessions on Communication of Statistics provide a platform for exchanging experience in this area.

(c) Valuing the costs of producing official statistics (work strand 2) to be led by the HLG Modernization Committee on Standards, especially to share current experience and practices in using CES standards as a basis for cost estimation.

56. The Bureau decided to establish a Task Force on Value of Official Statistics and asked the United Kingdom, together with Austria, Canada, Mexico, Eurostat, OECD and UNECE, to prepare the terms of reference for the Task Force. Eurostat expressed their willingness to participate in the Task Force.

VII. UNECE programme of work documents

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/21 and 22 by UNECE

Conclusions

57. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the UNECE report on the implementation of the Statistical Programme 2014 and the Programme of Work for 2016-2017 (ECE/CES/BUR/2015/FEB/21 and 22).

VIII. Dates and venue of next meetings

58. The CES Bureau confirmed the dates for its forthcoming meetings as follows:

- The next meeting will take place on 20-21 October 2015 in Geneva;
- The subsequent meetings are planned to take place during the week of 8 February 2016 and on 18-19 October 2016, venue to be decided.

59. The 63rd CES plenary session will take place on 15-17 June 2015 in Geneva, followed by the meeting of the OECD Statistics Committee.

60. The 64th CES plenary session is tentatively scheduled to be held on 27-29 April 2016 in Paris, back-to-back with the OECD Statistics Committee meeting.

IX. Other business

61. The Bureau decided which papers of the CES Bureau meeting will be made available on the web (www.unece.org/index.php?id=35523#/).

United Nations ECE/CES/2015/14/Add.10

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 June 2015

English only

Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of European Statisticians

Sixty-third plenary session
Geneva, 15-17 June 2015
Item 7 (a) of the provisional agenda
Reports on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians, its Bureau and Teams of Specialists

Implementation of the UNECE Statistical Programme 2014

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Report of the Seminar on Poverty Measurement

Summary

The UNECE Seminar on Poverty Measurement was held on 5-6 May 2015 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland as part of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistical Programme 2014-2015.

The present document is the summary report of that meeting and is provided to inform the Conference of European Statisticians of the organization and outcomes of the meeting.

GE.15-09723 (E)
1509723

Please recycle

I. Attendance

1. The UNECE Seminar on Poverty Measurement was held on 5-6 May 2015 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. It was attended by participants from Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Canada, Chile, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Mongolia, Norway, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and Uzbekistan. The European Commission was represented by Eurostat and the European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-Stat), the Eurasian Economic Commission, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the United Nations Statistics Division, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank were also represented. Experts from Oxford University (United Kingdom), University of Heidelberg (Germany), the Central Union of Turkish Agricultural Credit Cooperatives, and TU Dortmund University (Germany) participated at the invitation of the UNECE secretariat.

2. A number of participants could attend the Seminar thanks to the financial support provided by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

II. Organization of the meeting

3. Mr. Andrew Heisz of Statistics Canada was elected as Chair of the meeting.

4. The following topics were discussed at the meeting:

(a) Sustainable Development Goals and poverty measurement

(b) Practices in the UNECE region

(c) Monetary poverty: country cases

(d) Monetary poverty: comparability

(e) Multidimensional poverty: country cases

(f) Multidimensional poverty index

(g) Discussion on future work

(h) Subjective poverty

(i) Population groups

5. The following participants acted as discussants: for item (c) Mr. João Pedro Azevedo (World Bank), for item (d) Mr. Richard Tonkin (United Kingdom), for item (e) Mr. Bernd Becker (Germany), for item (f) Ms. Sabine Alkire (Oxford University), for item (h) Mr. Christian Oldiges (University of Heidelberg) and for item (i) Ms. Ala Negruta (Moldova).

6. The discussion at the meeting was based on papers that are available on the UNECE website.[1]

[1] http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=37879#/

III. Recommendations for future work

7. Participants appreciated the exchange of experience and good practice among countries with different practices and challenges in poverty measurement, which took place at the Seminar. To continue this exchange, the meeting proposed organizing the next UNECE seminar on poverty measurement in 2016.

8. Participants agreed that the 2016 seminar should address the measurement of poverty based on income and consumption as well as the measurement of multidimensional poverty, with emphasis on international comparisons and multilateral cooperation. In addition, the following topics were suggested for discussion:

(a) Comparable indexes of multidimensional poverty: indicators and data requirements

(b) Measurement of inequalities

(c) Measurement of vulnerability to poverty

(d) Sub-national or small-area estimates of poverty

(e) Consideration of social transfers in poverty estimates

(f) Consideration of own production in poverty estimates

(g) Consideration of wealth in poverty estimates

9. It was proposed that the 2016 seminar addresses the issues and challenges related to the measurement of the Sustainable Development Goals indicators on poverty and the strengthening of the role of official statistics in this area.

10. The 2016 seminar would also review and discuss the draft guidelines prepared by the UNECE Task Force on Poverty Measurement.

11. Participants suggested UNECE to pursue activities that improve member countries' capacities in measuring and communicating statistics on poverty and inequalities, and publication of the related metadata. Among others, these activities could facilitate harmonization of household surveys across countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

12. Referring to the proposed Sustainable Development Goal 17 "Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development", participants highlighted the need to mobilise resources for strengthening statistical capacity and advancing the data revolution in the UNECE region, and to promote this cause at various international fora, such as the International Conference on Financing for Development and the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Post-2015 Monitoring.

IV. Adoption of the report of the meeting

13. The present report was adopted during the closing session.

14. A summary of the discussion in the substantive sessions of the meeting will be presented in the annex of this report, to be prepared by the Secretariat after the meeting.

Annex I

Summary of the main issues discussed at the substantive sessions

1. Mr. Andres Vikat, Chief of the Social and Demographic Statistics Section of the UNECE Statistical Division opened the Seminar and explained its role in the context of activities of the Conference of European Statisticians.

2. The first presentation was given by Mr. Taeke Gjaltema of UNECE, who presented the latest developments in the monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their relevance for the poverty measurement. The presentation reflected the recent discussions on the post-2015 development agenda with an emphasis on the importance of measuring poverty, inequality and vulnerability under the SDGs.

3. The speaker outlined several important risks related to the process of the selection of indicators:

(a) The current debates may lead to the selection of indicators that are too many to have a meaningful evaluation of progress.

(b) The data may not be available for many of the chosen indicators and full coverage of the 169 targets may become impossible.

(c) The risk of the process becoming politically driven rather than a technical process may make it difficult to perform an objective monitoring.

4. The Seminar continued with a presentation from the Chair of the UNECE Task Force on Poverty Measurement who summarized the results of the UNECE Questionnaire on Methods in Poverty Measurement in Official Statistics. Forty-four countries replied, including 37 countries of UNECE region and 7 countries outside the UNECE region (Australia, China, Columbia, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, and Mexico). The results showed that the practices in measuring poverty differ substantially from country to country, both by type of poverty and by estimation methods. It was noted, for example, that although most of the countries use categories of income when they develop indicators of welfare/wealth, the applied categories are not fully comparable. Some countries use monetary income and others monetary income and income in kind.

5. Likewise, the measurement of subjective poverty in different countries is very diverse. Some use questions of the ability to meet various needs, that is, deprivation indicators. Others use questions of whether an individual considers him/herself as poor. Similar to subjective poverty, there are many different approaches to the measurement of non-income poverty and multidimensional poverty. Some countries apply indicators of satisfaction with non-material aspects of life in addition to those measuring satisfaction of material needs. Data sources and data collection methods also vary across countries. For international comparisons, a common view on operational definitions and methodological solutions needs to be worked out.

6. The next presentation was from Mr. Gady Saiovici (UNECE). He focused on the survey outcomes in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. It was noted that most of these countries use the absolute poverty approach. Half of them also reported using relative poverty and subjective poverty measurements. Estimates on multidimensional poverty were available in only three countries.

7. The Seminar covered four substantive topics: monetary poverty, multidimensional poverty, subjective poverty and population groups. A variety of speakers from national statistical offices and government agencies, representatives of World Bank, Eurostat, and other international organizations, leading researchers from Oxford University and other

academic institutions made presentations under the topics and provided more than 20 papers as a basis for the discussions. The summary of the discussions is below.

A. Monetary poverty

8. Under this topic, the Seminar focused on conventional measures of poverty that relate to household per capita income or expenditure estimates. It covered two substantive topics with one discussant each: (1) monetary poverty: country cases and (2) monetary poverty: comparability.

9. Part 1 of the session was focused on the national experiences in dealing with monetary poverty assessment and related methodological issues. It was based on papers and presentations from Azerbaijan, Latvia, the Russian Federation, Poland, Ukraine, and Norway. Jordan also submitted a paper, although the author could not attend the seminar to present it. Mr. João Pedro Azevedo of the World Bank led the discussion.

10. Part 2 of the session addressed comparability issues in estimating poverty. It was based on papers and presentations from UNDP, CIS-STAT, ECLAC, Eurostat and the World Bank. Mr. Richard Tonkin of the United Kingdom led the discussion.

1. Country cases

11. The Latvian participant presented the national experience with poverty and inequality measurement in the country during the crisis. The Central Statistical Bureau (CSB) of Latvia regularly publishes indicators of monetary poverty, material deprivations, social exclusion and income inequality in accordance with the Eurostat methodologies. Public attention to these indicators increased after 2008, during the economic recession. The CSB has found that these indicators showed trends that were often counterintuitive. Decrease in disposable income and employment levels during the crisis resulted in reducing the threshold of poverty risk by 22% in 2010 as compared to 2008, whereas nominal material needs did not go down. In conclusion, the speaker stressed the importance to communicate the statistics on poverty in a user-friendly manner despite the complicated methodologies.

12. The speaker from the Russian Federation presented the national experience with poverty and inequality statistics. Some new developments included an introduction of a relative poverty line and a rate based on the OECD standards, introduction of a two-level poverty measurement based on indicators of monetary and total household income, and the extension of indicators for describing poverty profiles. Efforts have been made to provide data comparability in the long-term.

13. The representative of Azerbaijan described in detail the data collection process using the Household Budget Survey. He provided a definition of the poverty line and presented the monetary measures of poverty in the country. He also provided information about a pilot project using Eurostat methodology in estimating material deprivation.

14. The participant from Poland illustrated that the choice of different methodological solutions influences poverty rates. For example, applying different equivalence scales does not have a significant impact on the assessments of poverty rates at the level of the whole population, however it does influence the results when broken down into different age groups. The speaker further discussed the differences in the methodologies of EU-SILC and the Household Budget Survey used in Poland, e.g. method of surveying, reference period, and definition of total disposable income. In conclusion, he pointed out that high quality metadata to the statistical data is necessary for the users to minimalize the risk of misinterpretation. It is also important to use the applied methodological solutions over time consistently in order to obtain valuable and comparable statistical data throughout the years.

15. The presentation from Ukraine described the impact of social and economic changes on poverty incidence and trends in Ukraine in 2000-2013 and gave an analysis of different forms of poverty: monetary and non-monetary, including subjective and deprivation poverty. It outlined the approaches to certain methodological challenges related to poverty measurement such as those aimed at improving the reliability of poverty indicators at a subnational level and minimizing possible bias in indicators due to insufficient coverage of high-income population groups. The speaker outlined future tasks related to the harmonization of studies on household incomes and material deprivations in the national statistical system of Ukraine with the European living conditions survey methodology.

16. The representative of Norway described the national experience of his country in using income registers to identify the poor, e.g. tax return register, the labour and welfare administration, the state housing bank, etc. The measurement of poverty largely benefited from cooperation of statisticians with their colleagues working on demographics. Although, registers proved to be an efficient source of poverty statistics in Norway, the speaker listed some of the drawbacks, including missing information on informal work or illegal activities, inter-household transfers, rental income, etc. The advantages of using registers, on the other hand, are that there is no risk of non-response and sampling errors and no need for population weighting. In general, the results of EU-SILC and Statistics Norway show a good overlap, however, as to more specific target groups, such as single parents, the data differs.

17. The discussant Mr. João Pedro Azevedo (World Bank) noted the existing data issues in both surveys and administrative records, including in times of transition from one survey to another, challenges with administrative records and non-response to household surveys. The speaker also pointed out the importance of having good metadata on the indicators to facilitate media and other users understand the information. Political selectivity of indicators (intentionally or not) was also noted as an issue.

18. Other issues raised in the discussion referred to the use of microdata and the latest improvements of microdata documentation under the World Bank's Data Documentation Initiative (DDI), and the use of equivalence scales and their adjustments factors.

19. The participants noted the diversity in measuring absolute poverty on a country and regional level and the need for regular update of absolute poverty lines in a comparable way across countries. It was mentioned that income and consumption data are collected systematically in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, which is a big advantage in this region.

20 Measuring absolute poverty in advanced countries based on absolute thresholds linked to food consumption causes problems, because it is only a small share in the observed pattern of consumption. Regarding relative poverty, a discussion took place on how the inequality measure between countries may become insufficient in the context of the EU and on the challenges of comparing inequality measures across countries.

21. The need to have a common approach and to follow the same principles in calculating absolute and relative poverty measures was emphasised. The participants asked for a coordinated effort of national statistical offices to work in one direction.

2. Comparability

22. The presentation of UNDP discussed poverty and inequality trends in selected countries of Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, and linked these trends to the issues of vulnerability, exclusion, and sustainability. The speaker presented evidence that reductions in income poverty and inequalities go together, and were broadly consistent with the region's development trends. European countries were more likely to use relative poverty standards, measured vis-à-vis some average living standard (generally 50-70% of median income or consumption), either in addition to or instead of absolute poverty thresholds. Furthermore, the speaker stressed the importance of measuring social exclusion and

vulnerability to poverty and outlined the main drivers of risks to poverty based on location, gender and age. The risks of poverty are particularly high for residents of rural areas, those unable to work, individuals living alone, single-parent families, and families with many children. In addition, the UNDP representative noted that measures of the extent to which people are deprived of the goods, services, capabilities, and opportunities to live long, healthy, prosperous lives—are too complex to be effectively captured in a single composite indicator.

23. The representative of CIS-STAT made a short review of methodological and conceptual approaches to poverty measurement and provided poverty estimates for the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. The speaker made examples of comparison among these countries to the extent possible with regard to absolute poverty. It was noted that even details like age group delineations for defining the young differ between countries and make it difficult to compare. The speaker concluded that it is important to have international guidelines to harmonise definitions and approaches.

24. The Statistics Division of ECLAC estimates annually the magnitude of poverty in Latin American countries as part of its regular follow-up of the social situation in the region. The speaker informed that the poverty lines in the Latin American countries are currently being updated. The basis for obtaining data is the income and expenditure survey, which is conducted every 10 years and not on a more regular basis. The presenter explained that the methods for measuring absolute poverty generally require using information on household food expenditure (as proxy for food consumption) and deriving its corresponding caloric intake and cost-per-calorie. Several issues related to the measurement of caloric intake through expenditure surveys were noted, as well as their effect on the construction of absolute poverty lines.

25. The representative of **Eurostat** presented the planned future developments of EU-SILC and new directions taken to modernize the social statistics in a policy context. The main objectives are to increase responsiveness to user needs, quality and efficiency. The programme included actions pushing towards integration of data collections, with standardisation of variables and modules, wider use of administrative data sources and improved statistical frames. The programme covered social microdata collections (collections based on samples), population statistics (including census) and administratively-based statistics and accounts.

26. The speaker stressed that the high priority given by the Council and the Commission to the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the European Union, even more in the context of the economic and financial crisis, requires comparable and, as much as possible, timely statistics to monitor this process. The demands concerning living conditions, income, inequalities, quality of life and integration with macroeconomics are also increasing. The need for timely data was also stressed, in particular in the crisis context where social impact of the policies is important. In addition to timely data, early estimates of relevant social indicators need to be developed, as is already the case in the area of national accounts and price statistics.

27. Key driver of EU-SILC revision is the multidimensional aspect of living conditions, social inclusion/ exclusion. There are several requests to accommodate in the current flexibility mechanism of the ad hoc modules. These issues include more information on children, access to services, vulnerability, consumption and wealth, structure of the households, quality of life and well-being, health, more breakdowns of social benefits and transfers, social transfers in kind , etc. Work on preparing early estimates methodology is starting and the improved measurement of material deprivation will be implemented on a systematic basis from 2016 onwards.

28. The representative of the **World Bank** discussed the concrete issues in constructing and updating of poverty lines. Poverty lines need to be updated regularly to better compare poverty of different households in the country, over time, between countries at global and

regional levels, to better monitor poverty, to better define a poverty reduction strategy and to better evaluate the impact of a poverty reduction strategy. The speaker described the theoretical advantages of consumption measures and the policy advantages of income measures, and the issues stemming from the required adjustments for household expenditures. In conclusion, he pointed out that clarity, transparency and simplicity are the most critical aspects of any poverty measure.

29. The discussion, led by Mr. Richard Tonkin (United Kingdom) stressed the definition of poverty and the purpose of measuring poverty. Consumption and income poverty measures are the most widely used. It was noted that countries face competing demands. Despite of this comparability needs to be improved. One way ahead is to try to replicate the poverty estimates provided by different countries. Access to microdata, however, is needed in order to make the replications.

B. Multidimensional poverty

30. Under this agenda item, the Seminar discussed multidimensional poverty. It covered two substantive topics with one discussant each: (1) multidimensional poverty: country cases and (2) multidimensional poverty index.

31. Part 1 of the session discussed the country cases on measuring multidimensional poverty. In addition, it considered the broader issue of measuring inequality. It was based on papers and presentations from OPHI, Austria, Turkey, and Heidelberg University. It also included comments on the papers from Colombia and Mexico, the authors of which were not present at the meeting. Mr. Bernd Becker of Germany led the discussion.

32. Part 2 of the session presented the national and international experiences with multidimensional poverty indexes. It was based on papers and presentations from Armenia and the World Bank jointly, ECLAC, and TU Dortmund University. Ms. Sabina Alkire of Oxford University led the discussion.

1. Country cases

33. During the session, the participants agreed that today the multidimensional character of poverty is broadly recognized. Poor health, job insecurity, social exclusion, malnutrition/obesity, lack of personal security, insufficient pension contributions are only some examples of other relevant aspects of multidimensional poverty. The participants debated on how to capture all these dimensions in a meaningful and comparable way.

34. The presentation by Austria covered the Austrian approach to measure multidimensional inclusion, and its challenges and comparability issues. The presentation also introduced SORESI, a micro-simulation social reform model in which users can test changes in taxation and benefits policy and their impacts on poverty and other social outcomes in a web-based platform, increasing transparency and providing the general audience the opportunity to test different policy options. It has been highlighted that the key components for their approach's success are: (i) solid data infrastructure, (ii) partnership for analysis (between the relevant Ministries and the Statistical Office), and (iii) participation and feedback (providing legitimacy and policy impact).

35. The representative of Turkey presented the poverty statistics produced by the Turkish Statistical Institute, the new proposed approaches and the current next steps. Turkey produces relative poverty statistics based on Eurostat's methodology and using EU-SILC data. In addition, they previously produced absolute poverty measures using the Household Budget Survey, however due to some difficulties in comparability over time and across regions, this approach has stopped in 2009. Currently, Turkey is investing in a new poverty measure approach using a multidimensional methodology including four dimensions (education, health, dwelling and labour force outcomes). Methodological

studies are ongoing to further examine the policymakers' needs and test different alternative scenarios. Turkey plans to publish this MPI in 2016.

36. The speaker from Heidelberg University showed his work on creating a monthly multidimensional food index in India, which provides a framework on poverty beyond the traditional poverty headcount measures and calculates deprivation in multiple food items. It also captures the links between landholding and multiple deprivations. Moreover, the monthly multidimensional food index can be used to track seasonality, acting as a useful tool for policy interventions.

37. The presentation by the researcher from Oxford University illustrated the possibilities of analyses that could be made by implementing an Alkire-Foster methodology using limited variables across EU-SILC cross-sectional data in from 2006 to 2012. The presentation included the methodology for identifying the deprivations, the possibilities of aggregation and decompositions (gender, age), and suggestions for some improvements to EU-SILC data, particularly on self-reported variables.

38. The discussion led by Mr. Bernd Becker (Germany) revolved around the appropriateness of having a single global MPI, particularly given the possibilities of different variable selections for different regions and the subsequent comparability issues. It has been acknowledged that regional choices of variables might be appropriate to capture specific contexts and to avoid very crude comparisons between countries at different levels of economic development.

39. On the empirical work possibilities, it has been noted that there is an increasing use of panel data in order to track individuals and households over time and that the existence of longitudinal data might even make possible a richer choice of variables in a multidimensional index.

40. Another topic was the increased effort concerning good communication of multidimensional statistics for the general audience and decision makers, particularly in light of the upcoming SDGs. The role of UNECE in promoting multidimensional poverty measures in the international arena was welcomed by participants.

2. Multidimensional poverty index

41. The first presentation under the topic of MPI, by Armenia and the World Bank demonstrated the methodological efforts to develop a multidimensional poverty indicator framework in Armenia. The multidimensional poverty data in Armenia aim to complement the current consumption-based poverty indicators, monitor progress on development goals, and better inform policymakers.

42. The presentation by ECLAC showed the links between multidimensional poverty measures in Latin America and the traditional poverty measures. It explicitly focused on how to compile existing datasets in order to provide roughly comparable numbers for the region. The presentation showed that the current available information is insufficient and lacks comparability. Also highlighted was the opportunity the current SDGs and data revolution processes offer to improve household surveys, through the harmonization of certain basic dimensions and increase in scope. The SDG process also acts as a stimulus for better coordination between the national statistical systems.

43. The presentation by the participant from the TU Dortmund University showed an initiative to produce multidimensional poverty measures in Germany to broaden the coverage of the current Reports of Poverty and Wealth in the country with a summary measure based on material deprivation. The results are consistent with earlier findings, which indicate the higher prevalence of poverty among people with migration background, elderly or with lower fathers' educational level. The structure of poverty in the country is relatively stable over time, with some groups (i.e. elderly and migrants) exhibiting specific profiles of poverty and deprivation.

44. The discussion led by Ms Sabina Alkire (OPHI) reflected some methodological aspects in calculating multidimensional papers. It was indicated that ideally multidimensional poverty indicators should include variables that can be impacted by policy changes rather than stock indicators. Also discussed were some data constraint aspects and comparability issues. Another topic was the possible links between the Alkire-Foster methodology and the capability approach. The inclusion of social exclusion indicators (i.e. political or social participation) in MPI measures was also welcomed by participants, and the issue of including subjective measures in these indicators should be a matter of further thought. The need of international cooperation in order to allow National Statistical Offices to be in a better position to inform policymakers in their respective countries of the value of multidimensional indicators was also debated.

C. Subjective poverty

45. The session examined the concept of poverty as an individual feeling and not as an objective status. It was based on papers and presentations from Poland and Ukraine. Colombia also submitted a paper, which was taken into consideration during the discussion. Mr. Christian Oldiges of the University of Heidelberg led the discussion.

46. During the session, the participants recognised the importance of person's own subjective perceptions of his or her well-being for poverty measurement, and provided examples of national determinants of subjective poverty and the approaches to its measurement.

47. The representative of Poland illustrated the link between poverty and subjective well-being. In Poland, subjective poverty is measured based on life satisfaction, emotional well-being, and sense of meaning in life. Low levels of income are not directly correlated with other forms of poverty. Similarly, income higher than the poverty threshold does not necessarily indicate good living conditions. The presenter, therefore, concluded that from the point of view of the policy needs, it is necessary to broaden the analyses of poverty to the non-income aspects.

48. The speaker from Ukraine described the approaches to poverty assessment on the national and sub-regional levels. It showed that the rural versus urban location is one the main factors that determines the risk of poverty. The speaker also presented results of the new social programmes on poverty reduction in certain groups of the population implemented in the country in the last years. One of the successful examples was the state programme on child allowances, which have been increasing eery2-3 years. Finally, the presenter highlighted new developments in measuring poverty, which included the inability to pay for medical services, bad living conditions, insolvency, and the loss of property due to war operations.

49. The discussion led by Mr Christian Oldiges (University of Heidelberg) summarized the points made by the presenters and in particular highlighted the fact that families who feel poor by objective criteria may not feel poor by subjective criteria and vice versa. In Poland, living conditions were found to influence subjective poverty rather than income poverty. In Ukraine, subjective poverty was the highest across all groups and regions. In the United Kingdom, based on Household Budget Surveys it was found that there is a strong correlation between the feeling of anxiety and income. An interesting point of discussion was how people perceive social payments. It was noted that it might be difficult to single out the effect of specific social schemes, e.g. child benefits, as same households may fall into different categories and may receive several benefits.

D. Population groups

50. The session looked into the issue of minority or vulnerable groups that are at risk to poverty. It was based on papers and presentations from EU-FRA and Kyrgyzstan. Ms. Ala Negruta of the Republic of Moldova led the discussion.

51. The representative of the EU-FRA made important conclusions regarding the data on Roma populations. The various sources have different strengths and weaknesses and should be used in a complementary manner. Additional ethnic identifiers are possible to include, e.g. (1) for censuses to provide reliable and robust data for monitoring long-term changes and (2) for standardized European surveys to yield data with higher frequency. Custom sample surveys can fill the gap in cases when applying ethnic identifiers is not possible and can provide comparability across countries. The presentation stressed the fact that the different approaches to poverty (absolute, relative or multidimensional) classifies as poor different people according to the different measures. It was noted that only 17% of the surveyed population was classified as poor according to the three measures. Overlap is observed in very small portions in Slovakia, Czech Republic, and Bulgaria. Systematically the multidimensional poverty gives the lowest number of poor; however, the concept reflects better the specific challenges of Roma inclusion, an area that might be addressed through thematic modules in the standardized European surveys.

52. The presentation by Kyrgyzstan showed their experience in measuring child poverty. In Kyrgyzstan, child poverty affects 45% of all children. The rate of child poverty is higher than average poverty in the country. The presenter described the methodology of the construction and calculation of their Child Poverty Index, based on different aspects of child well-being. The level of child poverty is determined by a combination of factors such as child morbidity and mortality, level of education and upbringing, access to health services, crime situation and other aspects directly or indirectly influencing the quality of children and adolescents lives.

53. The discussion led by Ms. Ala Negruta (Republic of Moldova) highlighted the fact that the traditional surveys or indicators usually do not capture certain population groups that are potentially more affected than others based on age, ethnicity, geographical location, legal status, or other characteristics. The discussant stressed the differences between EU and national definitions. Examples were given regarding coverage in rural and urban areas, the selection of dimensions and indicators for these groups.

54. During the discussion, it was clarified that disaggregating the population by gender, age and disabilities may require changes in survey samples. In some countries, oversampling was required, depending on the propensity of the population group members to identify themselves as belonging to the group. For example, questions like do you have double identity, and what is the language spoken in your family may help to identify the group members.

United Nations ECE/CES/2015/14/Add.11

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
1 June 2015

English only

Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of European Statisticians

Sixty third plenary session
Geneva, 15–18 June 2015
Item 7 (a) of the provisional agenda
Reports on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians, its Bureau and Teams of Specialists

Implementation of the UNECE Statistical Programme 2014

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Report of the Work Session on Migration Statistics

Summary

The joint UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics was held on 10–12 September 2014 in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova as part of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistical Programme 2014–2015.

The present document is the summary report of that meeting and is provided to inform the Conference of European Statisticians of the organization and outcomes of the meeting

GE.15-10970 (E)

1510970

Please recycle

I. Introduction

1. The joint UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics was held on 10-12 September 2014 in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova. It was attended by participants from Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and Uzbekistan. The European Commission was represented by Eurostat. The Eurasian Economic Commission, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CISStat) were also represented. An expert from Moscow State University (Russian Federation) participated at the invitation of the UNECE secretariat.

2. A number of participants could attend the Work Session thanks to financial support provided by the Russian Federation and the European Union.

II. Organization of the meeting

3. Mr. Alfredo Bustos y de la Tijera from Mexico was elected as Chair of the meeting.

4. The following substantive topics were discussed at the meeting:

   a) Experiences with using data from the 2010 round of censuses for measuring migration

   b) Migration behaviour, intention, and indicators of integration

   c) Better utilization of administrative data sources to measure migration

   d) Measurement of "hard-to-count" migrant groups

   e) Emerging issues and methodologies for the measurement of migration.

5. The following participants acted as Discussants: for sub-session (a) Mr. Giampaolo Lanzieri (Eurostat), for sub-session (b) Ms. Monica Perez (Italy), for sub-session (c) Ms. Irina Zbarskaya (CIS-Stat) and Mr. Han Nicolaas (Netherlands), for sub-session (d) Mr. Tengiz Tsekvava (Georgia), and for sub-session (e) Mr. Marcel Heiniger (Switzerland).

6. The discussion at the meeting was based on papers available on the UNECE website.[1]

[1] http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2014.10.migration2.html

III. Summary of discussion

1. Experiences with using data from the 2010 round of censuses for measuring migration

7. Discussion was based on papers from the United Kingdom, Turkey, Tunisia, CIS-Stat, the Canton of Zurich, Italy and the Republic of Moldova.

8. The paper from the United Kingdom looked at migration questions in their most recent population census, highlighting new questions on national identity, passports held, year of entry into the UK and intention to stay. Results from the 2011 Census were discussed, including comparisons of country of birth to passports held, year and age at arrival, and determination of short-term residents from the new intended duration of stay question.

9. The paper from Turkey presented results from their 2011 census, the first to combine register-based population data with a large-scale sample survey. The new methodological approach was discussed, as well as the main findings for the foreign-born population by different characteristics and the question on residence five years ago.

10. The paper from Tunisia discussed sources of migration data in Tunisia, as well as their experiences collecting immigration and emigration information on the 2014 census. Improvements made to the 2014 census survey instrument and data collection methods were also presented, followed by general preliminary findings.

11. CIS-Stat made an overview of census results from the 2010 population census in nine countries from the CIS region. Methods, questions asked, and results were compared and contrasted, for both internal and international migration, while data exchange and dissemination strategies were also discussed, with an eye towards standardizing data collection for the 2020 round of censuses.

12. The Canton of Zurich presented information about new migration patterns in the Zurich region and beyond, using data from the most recent Swiss Census and structural surveys. The paper highlighted the dichotomy between highly educated migrants from the EU and less educated migrants from other parts of the world coming to Switzerland.

13. Italy discussed their experiences with the 2011 register-based Italian Census, particularly with regards to improving measurement and coverage of foreign populations at the municipal level using administrative sources. Results show that while their efforts helped reduce the undercount of foreigners on the latest census, additional actions must be undertaken at the municipal level to further improve coverage of this population.

14. The Republic of Moldova provided a methodological overview of how migration was measured in their recent 2014 census, as well as some preliminary results. Migration was considered to be one of the most important demographic topics in the Moldovan census, with over ten questions directly related to its measurement, including place of birth, citizenship, location of and reason for absence, previous place of residence, and duration of residence.

15. Discussion revolved around a number of general questions related to the nature of census migration questions and their strengths and weaknesses, including time-intervals used, migration vs. migration events, intention of stay, and ways to improve coverage/non-response. Countries also responded to individual questions related to their papers.

2. Migration behaviour, intention, and indicators of integration

16. Discussion was based on papers from Canada, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.

17. The presentation from Canada presented the preliminary results of the UNECE Task Force on the Measurement of the Socio-economic Conditions of Migrants, which plans to conduct its work by the end of the year. In addition to discussing the Task Force's objectives, methods, and identified socio-economic dimensions and indicators, it also illustrated ways to consider a longitudinal perspective.

18. Switzerland examined a series of indicators they have developed to measure integration of the population with a migration background in Switzerland. The paper presented the political background for the exercise and over 60 indicators covering a variety of social and economic dimensions, as well as some analysis of the integration situation in Switzerland and future work to come.

19. Netherlands presented the results of their attempt to integrate administrative data sources to compensate for incomplete registration information on reasons for immigrant moves, including evaluation of intended (registered) vs. actual reasons for move. Information on the derived reason for move was required for more than half of immigrants to the Netherlands, while many were found to have different reported vs. derived reasons for move. The impact of these findings was further discussed.

20. The discussion considered how to possibly prioritize and standardize integration indicators among countries, as well as how to interpret aggregate indicators when migrants are both highly and low-skilled, or when countries have selective migration policies. Comparisons to native populations and the need for a longitudinal perspective were discussed as well.

3. Better utilization of administrative data sources to measure migration

21. Discussion was based on papers from Moscow State University, the Republic of Moldova, the United Kingdom, Slovenia, Spain, Italy, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, and Belarus.

22. Moscow State University described recent advances in the ability to measure migration in the Russian Federation using administrative sources. In addition to discussing existing administrative sources, and various strengths and weaknesses of these sources, the paper addressed issues related to the relationship between producers of administrative data and national statistical agencies. Recent methodological changes to how Russia measures migration flows are described, as well as issues related to measuring administrative changes vs. real migration events.

23. The presentation from the Republic of Moldova examined the structure and capacity of their administrative systems to measure migration, as well as a description of their recently published Extended Migration Profile. Methodological considerations and results from the Extended Migration Profile were also presented.

24. The United Kingdom's second paper addressed systematic improvements to their administrative data systems to better measure international migration at the local authority level. Special attention was paid on describing the challenge of integrating different data sources and improving communication and flow of information between the UK's ONS and the producers of administrative data on migration.

25. The paper from Slovenia described efforts to improve missing information from unregistered migrants in their Central Population Register by integrating information from other administrative data sources. Efforts have shown that under- and over-coverage of

migrants (unregistered immigrants and emigrants) in Slovenia's register based census can be improved by incorporating other administrative sources, but additional methodological work is still needed for measuring these populations.

26. Spain's paper detailed the methodological background for measuring migration via its Municipal Population Register database (PADRON). In addition to describing these procedures and results of measuring emigration flows from Spain, they proposed exchanging individual-level register data with other countries as a way to improve measurement of migration, particularly emigration.

27. The second paper from Italy looked at how new administrative data sources will be used to create a centralized population register which will improve measurement of migration. This register will allow for the continuous collection of migration data. Its objective is to improve quality of migration statistics, as well as create new avenues for methodological research and data exchange.

28. Tajikistan presented an overview of on-going activities to improve labour migration statistics, particularly through the better use of administrative data. A number of methodological challenges were discussed, including developing common statistical definitions for regular and irregular labour migration, measurement of remittances, proxy respondents on household surveys, how to identify labour migrants, and discrepancies found among different administrative data sources.

29. A summary of the legal framework and data sources available to measure migration in Azerbaijan was made by their statistical office. Data available from population censuses, administrative sources (and development of a population register), and sample surveys were all described, as well as plans to further improve these statistics.

30. Belarus described existing legal frameworks and available data sources to measure migration, including border control, register-based, census and household surveys. Methods to improve measurement of emigration in particular were described, including comparison of flows between Belarus, Kazakhstan, and the Russian Federation.

31. The discussion focused on the opportunities and challenges faced when using administrative data, particularly given the differing levels of development of administrative data systems across the region. Ways to improve cooperation between national migration services, maintainers of central population registers, statistical agencies, and other producers of administrative data were discussed, as well as who should be responsible for which tasks. Finally, the discussion addressed Spain's proposal for the exchange of individual micro-data between countries, as well as ways to integrate various administrative data sources to improve measurement of migration.

4. Measurement of "hard-to-count" migrant groups

32. The discussion was based on papers from Lithuania, Albania, Hungary, Norway and UNDP.

33. The paper from Lithuania described their efforts to improve the measurement of return migrants, in particular the extensive use of administrative data sources and the most recent population census. Results of a recent longitudinal analysis of return migrants were presented, which enabled deeper understanding of the historical behavioural patterns of return migrants to Lithuania.

34. Albania presented their recent experiences using a return migration survey to gain better insight into return migration processes in Albania. This survey was able to identify the characteristics of return migrants and provide additional information about their

experiences and reintegration into Albania, as well as develop policy recommendations on how best to tailor reintegration services for returnees.

35. Hungary, as part of the SEEMIG project, described their recent attempt to measure emigration using the labour force survey. In addition to information on household members living abroad, direct and indirect sampling methods were used to interview any current or former household member or sibling who had left Hungary since 1990, though the response rate for this phase of the project was quite low.

36. The paper from Norway described the challenges and quality of data when using population registers to measure emigration from Norway, including public participation, legal and regulatory considerations, and how register systems are updated. Underreporting of emigration is common and Norway's attempts to account for this were described, including use of expired resident permits, information from other persons or institutions, and unknown resident addresses. Further areas for data quality improvement were also addressed.

37. UNDP discussed preliminary results from their Central Asia regional study on migration, remittances, and human development. Particular attention was paid to describing the integration of several Central Asian countries into Russia's labour market and the impact of remittance flows and their role in reducing poverty in those countries, as well as the human costs associated with this dependence on migration.

38. Discussion revolved around the ability to mobilize public participation needed for measurement of migration via registers and household surveys. Issues of trust (both of and from respondents), sampling, question sensitivity, and the use of migration information for public policy making were also discussed.

5. Emerging issues and methodologies for the measurement of migration

39. Discussion was based on papers from Estonia, Mexico, UNECE, and Eurostat.

40. Estonia presented their experiences using "big data" from Estonian and Finnish cell phone companies to measure commuting and other forms of cross border mobility between Estonia and Finland. A number of data and methodological issues relative to measurement of migration were proposed for discussion, including cell phone coverage problems, data confidentiality and cost issues, limitations related to the possible use of more than one SIM card by one individual, distinguishing "trips" from changes of usual residence, as well as the potential of measuring short-term or circular migration.

41. Mexico provided an update on the status of the Task Force to Measure Circular Migration, describing the progress of the group towards coming to a common international definition for circular migration, taking into account frequency, duration, directionality, reason, and developmental impact. Testing of preliminary definitions is currently taking place using data from Austria, Estonia, Italy, Norway and Sweden and steps for future work described.

42. UNECE presented stock data collected from NSOs on dual-citizenship and tried to assess its impact on migration flow statistics. Though data are limited, for countries that do provide this information, dual citizenship was seen to be a rapidly growing phenomenon, with characteristics that varied by country. Though the number of dual citizens is currently relatively small, it could have an impact on migration statistics in the near future, particularly when using citizenship-based data from other countries to estimate emigration or "mirror statistics."

43. The paper from Eurostat looked at advanced log-linear estimation methods to calculate migration flows in the EU region using stock data from member countries.

Development of these methods could provide a method to overcome the issue of data quality and availability in migration statistics, particularly for estimating flows of persons born in specific areas, though much work still needs to be done to develop this methodology to better estimate country-to-country flows.

44. Discussion covered the potential applications of using "big data" to measure international migration, including a number of limitations that will need to be overcome. Several countries discussed dual-citizenship legislation in their countries and the recent increase in the dual citizenship. Finally, the technical capacity of countries to carry out advanced estimation procedures was also addressed at the regional level.

IV. Recommendations for future work

45. The results of the seminar on migration statistics were discussed at the April 2014 CES plenary session, including ways to implement some of their recommendations.

46. The meeting proposed to establish task forces to pursue methodological work on the following topics:

(a) Integration of multiple data sources for measuring migration, including data sources within a country and between countries, and good practices in communication between national statistical offices and producers of administrative data

(b) Assessment of the quality of migration data.

47. The meeting proposed that the next Work Session on Migration Statistics take place in 2016. The following topics were suggested for discussion in the 2016 Work Session:

a) Use of administrative data

b) Socio-economic characteristics of migrants and people with foreign background

c) Labour migration and its impact on the labour market

d) Dissemination and use of migration statistics for policymaking

e) Asylum seekers and refugees

f) Irregular migration

g) Good practices in communication between national statistical offices and producers of administrative data

h) Good practices in data exchange between countries

i) Emerging issues, including new methods to estimate and project migration.

V. Adoption of the report of the meeting

48. The meeting adopted parts I, II, IV, and V of the report before it adjourned. Part III was finalised by the secretariat after the meeting.